

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Because Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, I believe that it is obligated by law to serve the public interest. The danger in having large companies control the airwaves is that we get programming that serves the financial interests of the stockholders rather than the type of programming that serves the cause of democracy. Instead of programming that is produced at a faraway corporate headquarters for distribution all over the country, we should be seeing programming that reflects the needs and issues that affect real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter locally.

Sinclair's actions demonstrate why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve community participation and review.